

# Super Mileage Team places seventh in state-wide race

By Alden Heuring

The Pike Central Super Mileage Team finished another season of building and racing with a respectable seventh-place showing at the Indiana Super Mileage Challenge in April.

Coached by engineering teacher Ray Niehaus, the team built a car that got 490 miles to the gallon to earn their spot in the top fourth of more than thirty competing teams from all over the state, beating out teams from larger schools like Southridge, Forest Park, and Terre Haute South, even the University of Cincinnati.

## The race

The Indiana Super Mileage Challenge ran at O'Reilly Raceway in Indianapolis on the weekend of April 24. The race is divided into heats, each lasting 25 minutes. Teams are required to finish 10 laps before the time limit for each heat is called.

"After each heat they measure how much fuel you use and average things out to determine your fuel mileage," team captain Alex Morton said. "Our best mileage was 490 miles to the gallon." Race officials refuel the car between heats to ensure there is no cheating, and give the teams time to work on their cars and change drivers. Senator Dick Lugar appeared at the race and met several of the teams, including Pike Central's.

At the end of the day, Pike Central came home with a seventh place finish out of more than 30 teams.



The team met senator Dick Lugar at the race. (l to r): Emily Burns, BreAnne Lane, C.M. Brown, Brandon Bohnert, Dick Lugar, Trevor Church, Alex Morton, Jeff Estey, Richard Newkirk, and Ray Niehaus pose for a picture around the car while Anna Woolery reclines in the driver's seat.

"For next year, we want to redo the car body, but most of all we want to win," said Brown.

## The team

This year's Super Mileage Team has a roster nine names long. The team works in four groups: drivers, spotters, pit crewmen, and mechanics.

Anna Woolery and Jeff Estey were chosen to drive the car. Between each heat, the cars are given time in the pit to switch drivers and

undergo repairs. Woolery and Estey alternated driving to avoid fatigue.

"The first heat was the first time I had been able to drive the car, so I had a bunch of problems," Woolery said. "It's a lot different from driving a normal car."

The Super Mileage Car is cramped and low to the ground to reduce wind resistance. Although it was equipped with an air conditioner to keep drivers from getting too hot, it saw little use as the high for race day

was a mere 60 degrees. However, the team was up before sunrise tweaking their creation one last time before the race started.

Spotters BreAnne Lane, Trevor Church, and Emily Burns kept the driver in touch and at the proper speed throughout the race.

"Our walkie-talkies kept breaking and we had to get new batteries for them before the day was over," said Lane. "There were a few times when we had no communications."

Alex Morton and Brandon Bohnert manned the pits, making adjustments to the car in between each heat while the drivers rested.

"We could help with technical difficulties between heats, but if they crashed on the track, that was it," Morton said. "The oil cap came off during one heat and we had to keep it on with duct tape after we replaced the oil. Fortunately we didn't have any mechanical problems during the race."

C.M. Brown, Trevor Church and Richard Newkirk put the finishing touches on the car before the race and were ready to fix any mechanical problems that might occur.

"The track was wet the morning of the race, and water was getting thrown on the battery by the back tire," Brown said. "So we had to cover that up. We got everything else done fairly early though, which is rare."

Emily Burns, Alex Morton, and Richard Newkirk are all graduating seniors this year.

Burns is the daughter of Cathy Sachs of Petersburg. She will be attending Ivy Tech for auto mechanics in the fall.

Morton is the son of Becky and Larry Morton of Winslow. He will be attending Purdue for agribusiness management.

Newkirk is the son of Michell Mitchell of Velpen and James Newkirk of Edwardsport. He will be attending Vincennes University for electrical engineering.



# Super Mileage Team has good time at state competition

By Alex Morton

Pike Central Super Mileage Team had a tough time at the state contest but ended up in seventh in the 30-team field.

On April 26 the Pike Central Super Mileage Team attended the annual IMSTEA Super Mileage Competition at O'Riley Raceway in Indianapolis. With the help of the community we were able to finish our car and pay for all of our needs such as our hotel rooms and various parts of the car. For all of their support and interest in our car we would like to thank them and encourage them to continue to support the Pike Central technology students.

The event was held on the same weekend as prom and as you can imagine

this made for a very tiring weekend. Regardless of the circumstances we continued to work diligently on our vehicle.

Registration took place in the Vincennes University aircraft hanger at the Indianapolis airport. We were able to make it through registration without a single violation, which is a first for our school. After the registration we met with Senator Richard Lugar, who is one of the creators of the competition. We were able to shake his hand and to have a conversation with him about our car—it was truly an incredible experience.

After the registration and a speech from Senator Lugar, we packed up our car and found a team which was led by one of Mr. Niehaus'

friends. The team was from Brownsburg and they were located in the same area as the raceway. They were a very friendly school and allowed us to come into their school to work on our car and finish up any damages that had occurred on our way up to Indy. We completed everything quickly and for once were able to go back to the hotel and get some much needed rest.

We had to start the day off by getting up early and the weather was miserable to say the least. There was a mist of rain and the temperature was about 50 degrees, this probably hurt the overall miles per gallon of all teams in the beginning but as the day continued it probably had little affect. We were able to attempt seven

heats and completed four, three were needed to compete.

Our first two runs were probably the toughest of the day. The first run we started out by losing our oil cap in the pits which cause for massive oil loss and then our fuel tank was dumped out. We switched drivers and then on our second run our carburetor flooded and we were forced to bring our car into the pits. For our third run we put Jeffery Estey as our driver and he completed a run for us. He ran two more heats for us and we were able to get our three needed runs to be able to qualify.

We were able to get in two more runs to try and boost our average, but random technical difficulties occurred and we were unable

to achieve any boosts to our average. The day seemed to fly by and before we knew it the last heat was running. We packed up all of our equipment and loaded the car with hopes of success. We were able to get a 490 miles per gallon on one of our runs and this certainly gave us high hopes.

We ended up being seventh out of 30 unlimited cars. Our average miles per gallon was 296 miles per gallon, which was an increase

from last year of about 100 mpg.

We would like to thank all of our supporters because without them we would not have been able to compete. Once again Thank You—Suicide Doors, Paul Mann, Jasper Engines, Jon Estey, Mrs. Wheatley, Mrs. Williams, Jerry Hargus and Rick Mann, Four Star Fabricators, The men and women of the VFW, Toyota, and all of the others that have done something for us.